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Manual of Congregational Churches in Missouri

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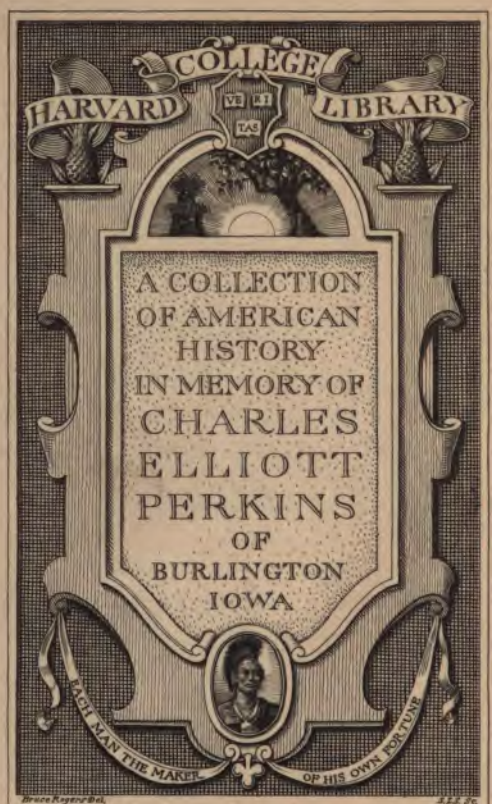
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Manual of Congregational Churches in Missouri.

MANUAL

OF THE

RINCIPLES, DOCTRINES & USAGES

OF

Congregational Churches:

COMPILED FOR USE

IN THE

GANIZATION OF CHURCHES IN MISSOURI.

CHICAGO:
CHURCH, GOODMAN & DONNELLEY, BOOK AND JOB PRINTERS,
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ORGANIC PRINCIPLES.

1. Congregationalists regard the Bible as the only infallible and authoritative directory of the principles of Church organization and discipline.

2. They hold that, according to the Scriptures, a congregation or company of Christians, voluntarily associating and covenanting together to worship God and celebrate his ordinances, is a church.

3. That as such, it is invested with all the rights, privileges and duties attached by Christ to his Church; is authorized to adopt and administer its own government and laws: to elect its own officers; admit and discipline its members; and provide for the proper ministration of worship and the ordinances; and to act authoritatively and conclusively on all appropriate business, independently of all ecclesiastical control.

4. That the sovereignty of the individual church, under Christ, is in the MEMBERSHIP of that church, all authority and office within it, emanating from their will, ascertained by a majority of suffrages.

5. That while the individual church in matters of doctrine, order, and discipline, is an independent body and amenable to no authority, except that of its Great Head, it is still under obligation to extend to other churches of Christ, and to receive from them that fellowship called in the Scriptures "the communion of saints," to receive and extend such advice and assistance as may be required by a common discipleship to a common Saviour.

8. You believe that credible evidence of a change of heart is indispensible to admission to membership in the church. Deut. xxx. 6; Isa. xliv. 5; Matt. v. 14, 15; x. 32, 33; Acts iv. 32; Rom. xv. 5, 6; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Phil. iii. 16.

9. You believe that the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, together with the Christian Sabbath, are of perpetual obligation; that the Lord's Supper is for believers, and Baptism for believers and their households.

Also, that all candidates for church membership should enjoy freedom of conscience respecting the subject and mode of baptism. Matt. xxviii. 18-20; Mark xvi. 16; Ex. xxii. 8-10; Deut. v. 14; Matt. xii. 1-5; xxiv. 20; Mark ii. 27, 28; John xx. 14; Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 10; Acts xvi. 15, 33, 34; 1 Cor. i. 16; vii. 14.

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to hold office until their successors are elected. (Provided, however, the office of DEACON may be made biennial or triennial, if the church so elect.)

4. OFFICERS' DUTIES.—The *Pastor's* duty shall be to watch over the spiritual interests of the Church, preach the Gospel, administer the ordinances, take charge of religious services, and act as moderator of the meetings of the church.

The *Deacons* are to assist the Pastor in the administration of the Lord's Supper, and in his pastoral duties, and to make provision for the pulpit in case of the absence or disability of the pastor, and his failure to furnish a supply for the same.

They are expected also to act as peacemakers when differences arise in the church; to counsel, comfort and aid the poor, the sick and the afflicted; disburse the private charities of the church; and take up contributions.

The *Trustees* are to have charge of the pecuniary affairs of the Church; provide a place of worship, and hold it subject to the uses and benefit of the Church (the Pastor always having control of the pulpit on the Sabbath) superintend the raising of the minister's salary, and provide for all incidental expenses.

The *Clerk* shall keep the records of the business meetings of the Church, and issue letters of dismission by direction of the Church.

5. Each of the above officers shall present a written report at each annual meeting, which shall be on the ——— day of ———: the Clerk reporting the number of admissions, dismissions, and deaths, and the history of the Church during the year.

6. It is a principle of this Church that the majority shall rule.

7. This Church shall have power to adopt such by-laws as shall be consistent with the above constitution.

8. This constitution may be altered or amended by a majority of two-thirds, provided the change does not infringe upon the organic principles of this Church.

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Having examined and assented to the following doctrines, you will now profess the same before these witnesses.

1. You believe in one God, the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe, mysteriously revealed in the Holy Scriptures as a Trinity—the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; each possessing all divine perfections. Deut. vi. 4; 1 Cor. viii. 4-6; 1 Tim. ii. 5; Isa. xl. 28; Gen. i. 1; Ps. cxxxvi. 6; 1 John v. 7; Matt. xxviii. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; John i. 7.

2. You believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and are the only infallible rule of faith and practice. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2; Luke i. 70; John xiv. 26; Acts iii. 18; 2 Tim. iii. 16; Deut. iv. 2; Eccl. xii. 13; Isa. viii. 20; John xii. 48.

3. You believe in the fall of our first parents, and the consequent entire depravity and lost condition of the human race. Gen. iii. 13; Rom. v. 12-18; Gen. vi. 5; Jer. xvii. 9; Rom. iii. 10-19.

4. You believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, "who is the image of God," assumed our nature, and by his sufferings and death on the cross, made expiation for the sins of the world, and that all who believe in him will be saved. Mat. i. 1; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Jn. i. 14; 1 Tim. iii. 5; Heb. ii. 14-17; 1 John ii. 2; John iii. xvi.

5. You believe that in order to salvation the sinner must be born again, and that regeneration is a moral change, produced by the Holy Spirit operating on the mind through the truth. John iii. 3; Gal. vi. 15; Rom. viii. 7; Heb. xii. 14; James i. 18; Phil. ii. 12, 13; John iii. 5; 1 Pet. i. 22.

6. You believe that God offers full forgiveness and everlasting life to all who will heartily repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; while those who do not thus believe, but persevere in sin, will perish. John iii. 16; viii. 24; Acts xvi. 31; 1 John v. 10.

7. You believe that the moral law, contained in the ten commandments, is binding on all men, and that the christian will show his sincerity by making it a rule of life. Deut. xi. 27; Neh. ix. 13; Psalm cix. 17; Matt. v. 17; Rom. vii. 12; Matt. v. 48; xxii. 37, 38; 1 Cor. x. 31; 1 Pet. i. 15.

8. You believe that credible evidence of a change of heart is indispensible to admission to membership in the church. Deut. xxvi. 17; Isa. xliv. 5; Matt. v. 14, 15; x. 32, 33; Acts iv. 32; Rom. xv. 5, 6; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Phil. iii. 16.

9. You believe that the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, together with the Christian Sabbath, are of perpetual obligation; that the Lord's Supper is for believers, and Baptism for believers and their households.

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10. You believe in the future resurrection of the body and in the final judgment, when all mankind will be judged according to their

works: the wicked consigned to endless punishment, and the righteous received into life eternal. Job xix. 26; Hosea xiii. 14; John v. 28, 29; vi. 40; Acts xxiv. 15; xxxi. 8; Matt. xxii. 46.

DO YOU THUS BELIEVE?

COVENANT.

Do you now avow the Lord Jehovah to be your God; the Lord Jesus Christ to be your Saviour; the Holy Ghost to be your Sanctifier? Renouncing the dominion of this world over you, do you consecrate your whole soul and body to the service of God? Do you receive his Word as the rule of your life, and, by his grace assisting you, will you persevere in this consecration unto the end?

(*The ordinance of Baptism, if not previously received, may here be administered.*)

COVENANT WITH THE CHURCH.

(*Here let those who unite by letter arise.*)

Do you solemnly covenant and agree to study the peace, purity and liberty of this Church; to love and watch over its members as your brethren; to receive from them all needful admonition? Will you labor together with us in the maintenance of its public worship and ordinances; submit to necessary discipline; and avoid all causes of scandal and offence, so long as in the providence of God you shall be connected with us?

(*The members of the Church will here rise.*)

We, then, the members of this Church, do cordially receive you to our fellowship. We promise to bear with you, to love, to edify, and by all means in our power to help you on in the divine life. Amen.

The following is the Declaration of Faith adopted by the Great Council of Congregationalists at Boston, on the 18th of June, 1865, and may be adopted instead of the foregoing Statement of Doctrine, if any church should so elect:

Standing by the Rock where the pilgrims set foot upon these shores, upon the spot where they worshipped God, and among the graves of the early generations, we, elders and messengers of the Congregational Churches of the United States in National Council assembled—like them acknowledging no rule of faith but the word of God—do now declare our adherence to the faith and order of the apostolic and primitive churches, held by our fathers, and substantially embodied in the confessions and platforms which our synods of 1648 and 1680 set forth or re-affirmed. We declare that the experience of the nearly two and a half centuries which have elapsed since the memorable day when our sires founded here a christian commonwealth, with all the development or new

forms of error since their times, has only deepened our confidence in the faith and polity of those fathers. We bless God for the inheritance of those doctrines. We invoke the help of the Divine Redeemer, that, through the presence of the promised Comforter, he will enable us to transmit them in purity to our children.

In the times that are before us as a nation, times at once of duty and of danger, we rest all our hope in the Gospel of the Son of God. It was the grand peculiarity of our Puritan fathers, that they held this Gospel, not merely as the grounds of their personal salvation, but as declaring the worth of man by the incarnation and sacrifice of the Son of God; and therefore applied its principles to elevate society, to regulate education, to civilize humanity, to purify law, to reform the church and the state, to assert and defend liberty; in short, to mold and redeem by its all-transforming energy, everything that belongs to man in his individual and social relations.

It was the faith of our fathers that gave us this free land in which we dwell. It is by this faith only that we can transmit to our children, a free and happy, because a christian commonwealth.

We hold it to be a distinctive excellence of our Congregational system, that it exalts that which is more, above that which is less important, and by the simplicity of its organization facilitates, in communities where the population is limited, the union of all true believers in one christian church; and that the division of such communities into several weak and jealous societies, holding the same common faith, is a sin against the unity of the body of Christ, and at once the shame and scandal of christendom.

We rejoice that, through the influence of our free system of apostolic order, we can hold fellowship with all who acknowledge Christ, and act efficiently in the work of restoring unity to the divided church, and of bringing back harmony and peace among all "Who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

Thus recognizing the unity of the church of Christ in all the world, and knowing that we are but one branch of Christ's people, while adhering to our peculiar faith and order, we extend to all believers the hand of christian fellowship upon the basis of those great fundamental truths in which all christians should agree. With them we confess our faith in God, in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word, who is exalted to be our Redeemer and King; and in the Holy Comforter, who is present in the church to regenerate and sanctify the soul.

With the whole Church, we confess the common sinfulness and ruin of our race, and acknowledge that it is only through the work accomplished by the life and expiatory death of Christ, that believers in him are justified before God, receive the remission of sins, and through the presence and grace of the Holy Comforter are delivered from the power of sin and perfected in holiness.

We believe also in an organized and visible Church, in the ministry of the Word, in the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, in the resurrection of the body, and in the final judgment, the issues of which are eternal life and everlasting punishment.

We receive these truths on the testimony of God, given through prophets and apostles, and in the life, the miracles, the death, the resurrection, of his Son, our Divine Redeemer—a testimony preserved for

the church in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments which were composed by holy men as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Affirming now our belief that those who thus hold "One faith, one Lord, one baptism" together constitute the one catholic church, the several households of which, though called by different names, are the one body of Christ; and that these members of his body are sacredly bound to keep "The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," we declare that we will coöperate with all who hold these truths. With these we will carry the Gospel into every part of the land, and with them we will go into all the world, and "Preach the Gospel to every creature." May He to whom "All power is given in heaven and earth" fulfill the promise which is all our hope: "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." To Him be praise in the church forever, Amen.

USAGES OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

OF DISCIPLINE.

Congregational Churches regard Matt. xviii. 15-17, as a divine directory of the principles and spirit, and as far as practicable of the process of church discipline; and feel themselves authorized to exercise discipline, as a divinely appointed means of vindicating the honor of the Gospel, maintaining their own purity, and reforming and saving offenders.

CHURCH CENSURES.

These are private or public admonitions, or the withdrawing of fellowship from incorrigible offenders. On the evidence of satisfactory repentance, the offender has a right to be forgiven and restored.

DISMISSION OF MEMBERS.

Members on removing, are expected to ask letters of dismission and recommendation. Requests for letters may be presented at any regular meeting of the church. Persons that are absent from worship and ordinances of the church more than one year, without communicating by letter or otherwise with the church, are granted letters certifying to their good and regular standing up to the commencement of such absence only.

CHURCH SUFFRAGE.

Congregational Churches recognize credible evidence of christian character as entitling one to Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and to christian watch and fellowship, but not as necessarily conferring the right of co-ordinate power in the government of the church. All members over

eighteen years of age, not under church censure or discipline, and adhering to the belief and covenant of the church, have the right of suffrage within it.

BUSINESS MEETINGS.

Regular business meetings, unless otherwise ordered by the church, may be held at the close of the weekly prayer meeting, or lecture.

Special business meetings may be called by the pastor or majority of deacons, or by the clerk on the written requisition of any seven church voters. (The annual meeting is provided for in the fifth statement of the constitution.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS AT MEETINGS.

AT SPECIAL MEETINGS.

1. Record of previous meeting.
2. Reception or dismission of members.
3. Unfinished business.
4. Reports of committees.
5. Resolutions and other business.

AT ANNUAL MEETINGS.

1. Report of last annual meeting.
2. Annual Reports.
3. Election of officers.
4. Proposed amendment of constitution.
5. Resolutions and other business.

These orders of business are varied to suit the circumstances, and convenience of the churches.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

Besides the ordinary Sabbath services :

1. A general prayer meeting is held on one or more week evenings. Some churches substitute a lecture by the pastor in the place of the second prayer meeting.

2. A female prayer meeting on some day of the week.

3. The Lord's Supper every quarter, or once in two months, preceded by a Preparatory Lecture on the Friday or Saturday previous.

4. The Sabbath school, which embraces every member of the church either as teachers or scholars.

The above are not arbitrary appointments, but are essential to Christian enjoyment and spiritual growth. No member can neglect them without doing wrong to himself, and hindering the Christian progress of the other members. Mal. iii. 16 ; Heb. x. 25.

BENEVOLENT CONTRIBUTIONS.

Congregational churches regard it as a very essential part of religion to give liberally of their substance for the support of religious and charitable institutions. They consider the covenant vow by which the Christian publicly declares his allegiance to God, as including the Phila*rty* as well as the soul and body of the believer. Contributions are

taken up systematically every month, or once in two months. The following societies are exclusively sustained by these churches: the American Home Missionary Society; the American Congregational Union; the American Missionary Association.

They contribute largely also to the education of the ministry, maintaining six Theological Seminaries, besides supplying facilities for the religious education of 286,798 children in the Sabbath school.

In connection with other denominations, these churches, nearly 3000 in number, support the following societies: the American Bible Society; the American Board of Commission for Foreign Missions; the American and Foreign Christian Union; the Seaman's Friends Society; the American Tract Society of Boston.

ON MORAL QUESTIONS.

Congregational Churches are the earnest friends of *temperance*. They believe and inculcate that every one, and especially professing Christians, should entirely abstain from all intoxicating drinks as a beverage.

By their principles and their history, they are earnestly attached to the doctrine of *personal liberty*. They believe and inculcate that the system of human bondage is contrary to the spirit and teachings of the Bible.

They are the strong friends of the government also, and believe that the powers that be are ordained of God, and that unconditional loyalty to their government is a Christian duty. No Congregational Church has been found disloyal in the recent struggle of the nation against the slaveholder's rebellion.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF CONGREGATIONALISM.

But a superficial examination of the New Testament is needed to show us what principles of polity were adopted by the Apostles in the organization of the primitive churches. Under the guidance of the Spirit of God, and following the principles laid down by Christ in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, they adopted that mode of government which, for a better name, is now called Congregationalism. The name is simply a suggestion of the fact, that the *congregation possesses all the governing power*. The apostles invariably addressed each congregation of Christians as though it was the only church in the place, and when they referred to the churches of any given territory, they always used the plural number, as "the churches of Galatia," Macedonia, &c. The bishops, or teachers, or elders, were each the minister of one church, except in cases of a large church, where several men were associated, as "the elders of Ephesus," to whom Paul gave the name of bishops. Mosheim, who was a Lutheran, of

over

and whose work on ecclesiastical history is of high authority, says, vol. i. p. 86, "The highest authority was in the people, or the whole body of Christians in the apostolic churches, for even the apostles themselves inculcated by their example, that nothing of any moment was to be done, or determined on, but with the knowledge and consent of the brotherhood. The assembled people, therefore, elected their own rulers and teachers, or by their authoritative consent, received them when recommended to them. They also by their suffrages rejected or confirmed the laws that were proposed by their rulers in their assemblies; they excluded profligate or lapsed brethren, and restored them; they decided the controversies and disputes that arose: in a word, the people did everything that is proper for those in whom the supreme power is vested. Acts i. 15-26; Acts vi. 3-6; 2 Cor. viii. 19; Acts xviii. 17; 1 Cor. v. 4, 13; 2 Cor. ii. 6." Also, on same page, he says—"For all the churches in these primitive times were independent bodies; none of them were subject to the jurisdiction of any other." This he also affirms was the case with all the churches during a great part of the second century, on p. 142, vol. 1.

Neander, another high authority in Church history, testifies to the same. In the latter half of the second century, when the fervor of apostolic piety had begun to disappear, there arose unchristian dissensions among the clergy, and Jerome suggests that the idea of a standing officer called a bishop, was resorted to as an expedient to quell them. The progress towards a hierarchy was rapid. Ecclesiastical officers were multiplied. Men ambitious to acquire power made use of their sacred office to secure increased authority, and the order of the church was soon changed from the simple democracy of the Apostles into the oppressive abominations of the Papacy.

"Neighboring churches were first consolidated into one bishopric, then aggregated bishoprics grew into a vast hierarchy, which overcame all popular resistance and settled itself securely for centuries at Rome, giving birth there to those monstrous and malignant heresies of doctrine, and those mournful and miserable immoralities of life, which, raying out gloom upon the general mind and heart, brought on the long night of the dark ages."—(Congregationalism by H. M. Dexter, D.D., p. 22.)

A little band known as the Waldenses in the valleys of the Cottian Alps, successfully resisted this invasion of Papal corruption, maintaining their position against all persecution. This forms the only link between the Apostolic time and the Reformation.

The first Congregational church after the Reformation was formed in 1606 in Scrooby in the North of England, where a few Christians hunted by the hounds of the Establishment took refuge. That church emigrated to Amsterdam in Holland, John Robinson being its pastor. After a year it removed to Leyden, where it remained for eleven years. In 1620 one division of this church came to America and landed from the *Mayflower* on Plymouth Rock, Dec. 22, 1620. This was the first church of this, or any other order in America, except perhaps one or two small Episcopal organizations in Eastern Virginia. More than eighty years after this the first Presbyterian church in this country was organized at Philadelphia.

The churches of New England are largely Congregational. There is a large and increasing membership in all the former free states and territories. With the exception of two denominations, it has the highest number of churches, and the largest membership of any Protestant sect in the United States. It supports a large number of missionaries in the newer portions of the States, and in the Territories, and in foreign lands. It has, at this date, Oct., 1865, about twenty churches in Missouri, and the prospect of a rapid and extensive increase.

LETTERS MISSIVE FOR CALLING COUNCILS.

---

1. TO ORGANIZE A CHURCH.

To the Congregational Church in ———

DEAR BRETHREN,—The Great Head of the Church having inclined a number of believers here to think that it is our duty to become associated as a Congregational Church, we respectfully request you, by your pastor and a delegate, to meet in council at ——— in this place, on the ——— of ——— at ——— o'clock ——— to consider the expediency of the course proposed by us, and advise us in reference thereto, and if thought best, consummate such organization by public and appropriate exercises.

Wishing you grace, mercy and peace, we subscribe ourselves,

Your brethren in Christ,

(*Here insert names of committee of those proposing to unite.*)

---

2. TO ORDAIN OR INSTALL A MINISTER.

The Congregational Church in ——— *to the Congregational Church in* ——— *sendeth greeting:*

BELOVED BRETHREN,—The Great Head of the Church has kindly united us, and the congregation statedly worshipping with us, in the choice of Mr. (Rev.) A. B. as our pastor and teacher, and he has accepted our invitation to that office. We therefore affectionately request your attendance by pastor and delegate at ——— on the ——— day of ——— next at ——— o'clock ——— to examine the candidate, and advise us in reference to the same, and if judged expedient, to assist in the ordination (installation) exercises. Wishing you grace, mercy, and peace.

We are fraternally yours,

(*Here insert names of committee of the church.*)

S. W. Emery.

MANUAL

OF THE

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OF

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES,

COMPILED FOR USE

IN THE

ORGANIZATION OF CHURCHES IN MISSOURI.

Second Edition.

SAINT LOUIS:
B. P. STUDLEY & CO., PRINTERS STATIONERS, LITHOGRAPHERS, AND BINDERS,
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To the Congregational Church in ———

DEAR BRETHREN,—The Great Head of the Church having inclined a number of believers here to think that it is our duty to become associated as a Congregational Church, we respectfully request you, by your pastor and a delegate, to meet in council at ——— in this place, on the ——— of ——— at ——— o'clock ——— to consider the expediency of the course proposed by us, and advise us in reference thereto, and if thought best, consummate such organization by public and appropriate exercises.

Wishing you grace, mercy and peace, we subscribe ourselves,

Your brethren in Christ,

(*Here insert names of committee of those proposing to unite.*)

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2. TO ORDAIN OR INSTALL A MINISTER.

The Congregational Church in ——— to the Congregational Church in ——— sendeth greeting:

BELOVED BRETHREN,—The Great Head of the Church has kindly united us, and the congregation statedly worshipping with us, in the choice of Mr. (Rev.) A. B. as our pastor and teacher, and he has accepted our invitation to that office. We therefore affectionately request your attendance by pastor and delegate at ——— on the ——— day of ——— next at ——— o'clock ——— to examine the candidate, and advise us in reference to the same, and if judged expedient, to assist in the ordination (installation) exercises. Wishing you grace, mercy, and peace,

We are fraternally yours,

(*Here insert names of committee of the church.*)

S. W. Emery.

MANUAL

OF THE

Principles, Doctrines and Usages

OF

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES,

COMPILED FOR USE

IN THE

ORGANIZATION OF CHURCHES IN MISSOURI.

Second Edition.

SAINT LOUIS:
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June 30, 1915

ORGANIC PRINCIPLES.

1. Congregationalists regard the Bible as the only infallible and authoritative directory of the principles of Church organization and discipline.

2. They hold that, according to the Scriptures, a congregation or company of Christians, voluntarily associating and covenanting together to worship God, celebrate his ordinances, and advance the Redeemer's Kingdom, is a church.

3. That as such, it is invested with all the rights, privileges and duties attached by Christ to his Church: is authorized to adopt and administer its own government and laws; to elect its own officers; admit and discipline its members; and provide for the proper ministration of worship and the ordinances; and to act authoritatively and conclusively on all appropriate business, independently of all ecclesiastical control.

4. That the sovereignty of the individual church, under Christ, is in the MEMBERSHIP of that church, all authority and office within it emanating from their will, ascertained by a majority of suffrages.

5. That while the individual church in matters of doctrine, order, and discipline, is an independent body and amenable to no authority, except that of its Great Head, it is still under obligation to extend to other churches of Christ, and to receive from them that fellowship called in the Scriptures "the communion of saints," to receive and extend such advice and assistance as may be required by a common discipleship to a common Saviour.

CONSTITUTION.

1. This Church shall be called THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH of———

2. All persons may become members thereof who give good evidence of piety, and assent to its religious faith.

3. The subjects and mode of Baptism shall be left for each to decide according to his views of duty.

4. The permanent officers of this Church shall be a PASTOR, and one or more DEACONS.

5. The annual officers shall be three or more TRUSTEES, a CLERK and TREASURER, all of whom shall be elected at the annual meeting, to hold office until their successors are elected. (Provided, however, the office of DEACON may be made biennial or triennial, or for a longer period, if the church so elect.)

6. OFFICERS' DUTIES.—The *Pastor's* duty shall be to watch over the spiritual interests of the Church, preach the Gospel, administer the

ordinances, take charge of religious services, and ordinarily act as moderator of the meetings of the church.

The *Deacons* are to assist the Pastor in the administration of the Lord's Supper, and in his pastoral duties, and to make provision for the pulpit in case of the absence or disability of the pastor, and his failure to furnish a supply for the same.

They are expected also to act as peacemakers when differences arise in the church; to counsel, comfort and aid the poor, the sick and the afflicted; disburse the private charities of the church; and take up contributions.

The *Trustees* are to have charge of the pecuniary affairs of the Church; provide a place of worship, and hold it subject to the uses and benefit of the Church (the Pastor always having control of the pulpit on the Sabbath), superintend the raising of the minister's salary, and provide for all incidental expenses.

The *Clerk* shall keep the records of the business meetings of the Church, and issue letters of dismission by direction of the Church.

The *Treasurer* shall have charge of all the funds of the Church, and pay them out as the Church shall order.

7. Each of the above officers shall present a written report at each annual meeting, which shall be on the ——— day of ———; the Clerk reporting the number of admissions, dismissions, and deaths, and the history of the Church during the year.

8. All *special* business meetings shall be notified one Sabbath previous, and the nature of the business stated. The wishes of the majority of members present, at all meetings, expressed by their votes, who are in good standing and over eighteen, shall be authoritative. *Ordinary* business meetings may be held without such notice at close of the prayer meeting, or preparatory lecture.

9. This Church shall have power to adopt such by-laws as shall be consistent with the above constitution.

10. This constitution may be altered or amended by a majority of two-thirds, provided the change does not infringe upon the organic principles of this Church.

(For further items of church order see *Usages of Congregational Churches* pages 8 to 11.)

STATEMENT OF DOCTRINES.

1. We believe in one God, the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the Universe, mysteriously revealed in the Holy Scriptures as a Trinity—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; each possessing all divine perfection. Deut. vi. 4; 1 Cor. viii. 4-6; 1 Tim. ii. 5; Isa. xl. 28; Gen. i. 1; Ps. cxxxvi. 6; 1 John v. 7; Matt. xxviii. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; John v. 7.

2. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and are the only infallible rule of faith and practice. 2 Sam. xxiii. 2; Luke i. 70; John xiv. 26; Acts iii. 18; 2 Tim. iii. 16; Deut. iv. 2; Eccl. xii. 13; Isa. viii. 20; John xii. 48.

3. We believe in the fall of our first parents, and the consequent

entire depravity and lost condition of the human race. Gen. iii. 13; Rom. v. 12-18; Gen. vi. 5; Jer. xvii. 9; Rom. iii. 10-19.

4. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, "the second person in the Godhead," assumed our nature, and by his sufferings and death on the cross made expiation for the sins of the world, and that all who believe in him will be saved. Mat. i. 1; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Jn. i. 14; 1 Tim. ii. 5; Heb. ii. 14-17; 1 John ii. 2; John iii. 16.

5. We believe that in order to salvation the sinner must be born again, and that regeneration is a moral change, produced by the Holy Spirit operating on the mind through the truth. John iii. 3; Gal. vi. 15; Rom. viii. 7; Heb. xii. 14; James i. 18; Phil. ii. 12, 13; John iii. 8; 1 Pet. i. 22.

6. We believe that God offers full forgiveness and everlasting life to all who will heartily repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; while those who do not thus believe, but persevere in sin, will perish. John iii. 16; viii. 24; Acts xvi. 31; 1 John v. 10.

7. We believe that the moral law, contained in the ten commandments, is binding on all men, and that the christian will show his sincerity by making it a rule of life. Deut. xi. 27; Neh. ix. 13; Psalm xix. 17; Matt. v. 17; Rom. vii. 12; Matt. v. 48; xxii. 37, 38; 1 Cor. x. 31; 1 Pet. i. 15.

8. We believe that credible evidence of a change of heart is indispensible to admission to membership in the church. Deut. xxvi. 17; Isa. xliv. 5; Matt. v. 14, 15; x. 32, 33; Acts iv. 32; Rom. xv. 5, 6; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Phil. iii. 16.

9. We believe that the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, together with the Christian Sabbath, are of perpetual obligation. Matt. xxviii. 18-20; Mark xvi. 16; Ex. xx. 8-10; Deut. v.14; Matt. xii. 1-5; xxiv. 20; Mark ii. 27, 28; John xx. 1; Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2; Rev. i. 10.

10. We believe in the future resurrection of the body and in the final judgment, when all mankind will be judged according to their works; the wicked consigned to endless punishment, and the righteous received into life eternal. Job. xix. 26; Hosea xiii. 14; John v. 28, 29; vi. 40; Acts xxiv. 15; xxxi. 8; Matt. xxii. 46.

FORM OF PUBLIC ADMISSION INTO THE CHURCH.

Candidates will usually be received on the morning of Communion Sabbath, immediately after the sermon. While they are coming forward to present themselves in front of the pulpit, the congregation shall unite in singing a verse or two of some familiar hymn, *e. g.*,

"Just as I am, without one plea."

Then the minister shall make the following or a similar address:

Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my father which is in heaven.

Beloved Friends:—In obedience to the Saviour's command, and impelled by a sincere desire to glorify him before men, you are about to

take a step of no ordinary moment. God, angels, and men are witnessing this act, and the memory of it will survive the great day of account.

Having satisfied the Church that you have exercised repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and that you agree with all the essential doctrines of our Faith, you come to join us thus publicly, not to parade your personal worth or fitness, nor to imply that you are complete either in religious knowledge or character; but to make an open acknowledgment before men that Christ is your Redeemer and King.

Do you therefore renounce the world as the chief object of your love? Do you engage in all your private and public life to honor the Saviour, by precept and example? And will you give to Him your whole heart, the service of your hands, and the ownership of your worldly goods, and heartily join with us in the following

CONFESSION:

We confess our faith in God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, the only living and true God; in Jesus Christ the incarnate Word, who is exalted to be our Redeemer and King; and in the Holy Comforter, who is present in the Church to regenerate and sanctify the soul.

With the whole Church we confess the common sinfulness and ruin of our race, and acknowledge that it is only through the work accomplished by the life and expiatory death of Christ that we are justified before God, and receive the remission of sins; and that it is through the presence and grace of the Holy Comforter alone that we hope to be delivered from the power of sin, and to be perfected in holiness.

We believe also in an organized and visible Church; in the Ministry of the Word; in the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; in the resurrection of the body, and in the final judgment, the issues of which are eternal life and everlasting punishment.

We receive these truths on the testimony of God, given originally through prophets and apostles, and in the life, the miracles, the death, the resurrection of his Son, our divine Redeemer,—a testimony preserved for the Church in the Old and New Testaments, which were composed by holy men, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Do you thus promise and confess?

(*Administration of Baptism.—Those uniting by certificate will come forward after the Baptism.*)

Do you covenant with us, as far as is possible, by active effort, to seek the peace, purity, and edification of this Church; to sustain the stated means of grace; to aid us in turning to Christ the souls of others; and to submit to christian discipline? And will you seek, by prayer and faithful endeavor, a constant growth in grace, and such a likeness to Christ that, when the scenes of earth are passed, we may rejoice together in the fellowship of heaven?

(*The Church will rise.*)

We then, members of this Church, do joyfully and cordially receive you into our number. We promise to bear with you, to watch over you, to love you, to aid you by our counsel and our prayers, to walk with you

in joy and in sorrow, and to endeavor, by all means in our power, to advance you in the divine life.

And may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost be upon you and remain with you forever. Amen.

Hymn—O happy day, &c.

The following is the Declaration of Faith adopted by the Great Council of Congregationalists at Boston, on the 18th of June, 1865, and may be adopted instead of the foregoing Statement of Doctrine, if any church should so elect:

Standing by the Rock where the pilgrims set foot upon these shores, upon the spot where they worshipped God, and among the graves of the early generations, we, elders and messengers of the Congregational Churches of the United States in National Council assembled—like them acknowledging no rule of faith but the word of God—do now declare our adherence to the faith and order of the apostolic and primitive churches, held by our fathers, and substantially embodied in the confessions and platforms which our synods of 1648 and 1680 set forth or re-affirmed. We declare that the experience of the nearly two and a half centuries which have elapsed since the memorable day when our sires founded here a christian commonwealth, with all the development or new forms of error since their times, has only deepened our confidence in the faith and polity of those fathers. We bless God for the inheritance of those doctrines. We invoke the help of the Divine Redeemer, that, through the presence of the promised Comforter, he will enable us to transmit them in purity to our children.

In the times that are before us as a nation, times at once of duty and of danger, we rest all our hope in the Gospel of the Son of God. It was the grand peculiarity of our Puritan fathers, that they held this Gospel, not merely as the grounds of their personal salvation, but as declaring the worth of man by the incarnation and sacrifice of the Son of God; and therefore applied its principles to elevate society, to regulate education, to civilize humanity, to purify law, to reform the church and the state, to assert and defend liberty; in short, to mold and redeem by its all-transforming energy, everything that belongs to man in his individual and social relations.

It was the faith of our fathers that gave us this free land in which we dwell. It is by this faith only that we can transmit to our children a free and happy, because a christian commonwealth.

We hold it to be a distinctive excellence of our Congregational system, that it exalts that which is more, above that which is less important, and by the simplicity of its organization facilitates, in communities where the population is limited, the union of all true believers in one christian church; and that the division of such communities into several weak and jealous societies, holding the same common faith, is a sin against the unity of the body of Christ, and at once the shame and scandal of christendom.

We rejoice that, through the influence of our free system of apostolic order, we can hold fellowship with all who acknowledge Christ, and act efficiently in the work of restoring unity to the divided church, and of bringing back harmony and peace among all "Who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

Thus recognizing the unity of the church of Christ in all the world, and knowing that we are but one branch of Christ's people, while adhering to our peculiar faith and order, we extend to all believers the hand of christian fellowship upon the basis of those great fundamental truths in which all christians should agree. With them we confess our faith in God; in Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word, who is exalted to be our Redeemer and King; and in the Holy Comforter, who is present in the church to regenerate and sanctify the soul.

With the whole Church, we confess the common sinfulness and ruin of our race, and acknowledge that it is only through the work accomplished by the life and expiatory death of Christ, that believers in him are justified before God, receive the remission of sins, and through the presence and grace of the Holy Comforter are delivered from the power of sin and perfected in holiness.

We believe also in an organized and visible Church, in the ministry of the Word, in the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, in the resurrection of the body, and in the final judgment, the issues of which are eternal life and everlasting punishment.

We receive these truths on the testimony of God, given through prophets and apostles, and in the life, the miracles, the death, the resurrection, of his Son, our Divine Redeemer,—a testimony preserved for the church in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments which were composed by holy men as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Affirming now our belief that those who thus hold "One faith, one Lord, one baptism," together constitute the one catholic Church, the several households of which, though called by different names, are the one body of Christ; and that these members of his body are sacredly bound to keep "The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," we declare that we will co-operate with all who hold these truths. With these we will carry the Gospel into every part of the land, and with them we will go into all the world, and "Preach the Gospel to every creature." May He to whom "All power is given in heaven and earth" fulfill the promise which is all our hope: "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." To Him be praise in the church forever, Amen.

USAGES OF CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES.

OF DISCIPLINE.

Congregational Churches regard Matt. xviii. 15-17, as a divine directory of the principles and spirit, and as far as practicable of the process of church discipline; and feel themselves authorized to exercise discipline, as a divinely appointed means of vindicating the honor of the Gospel, maintaining their own purity, and reforming and saving offenders.

CHURCH CENSURES.

These are private or public admonitions, or the withdrawing of fellowship from incorrigible offenders. On the evidence of satisfactory repentance, the offender has a right to be forgiven and restored.

DISMISSION OF MEMBERS.

Members on removing, are expected to ask letters of dismission and recommendation. Requests for letters may be presented at any regular meeting of the church. Persons that are absent from worship and ordinances of the church more than one year, without communicating by letter or otherwise with the church, are granted letters certifying to their good and regular standing up to the commencement of such absence only.

CHURCH SUFFRAGE.

Congregational Churches recognize credible evidence of christian character as entitling one to Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and to christian watch and fellowship, but not as necessarily conferring the right of co-ordinate power in the government of the church. All members over eighteen years of age, not under church censure or discipline, and adhering to the belief and covenant of the church, have the right of suffrage within it.

BUSINESS MEETINGS.

Regular business meetings, unless otherwise ordered by the church, may be held at the close of the weekly prayer meeting, or lecture.

Special business meetings may be called by the pastor or majority of deacons, or by the clerk on the written requisition of any seven church voters. (The annual meeting is provided for in the seventh statement of the constitution.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS AT MEETINGS.

AT SPECIAL MEETINGS.

1. Record of previous meeting.
2. Reception or dismission of members.
3. Unfinished business.
4. Reports of committees.
5. Resolutions and other business.

AT ANNUAL MEETINGS.

1. Report of last annual meeting.

2. Annual Reports.
3. Election of officers.
4. Proposed amendment of constitution.
5. Resolutions and other business.

These orders of business are varied to suit the circumstances and convenience of the churches.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES.

Besides the ordinary Sabbath services:

1. A general prayer meeting is held on one or more week evenings. Some churches substitute a lecture by the pastor in the place of the second prayer meeting. Some churches hold a monthly conference or fellowship meeting.
2. A female prayer meeting on some day of the week.
3. The Lord's Supper every quarter, or once in two months, preceded by a Preparatory Lecture on the Friday or Saturday previous.
4. The Sabbath school, which embraces every member of the church, either as teachers or scholars.

The above are not arbitrary appointments, but are essential to Christian enjoyment and spiritual growth. No member can neglect them without doing wrong to himself, and hindering the Christian progress of the other members. Mal. iii. 16. Heb. x. 25.

BENEVOLENT CONTRIBUTIONS.

Congregational churches regard it as a very essential part of religion to give liberally of their substance for the support of religious and charitable institutions. They consider the covenant vow by which the Christian publicly declares his allegiance to God, as including the *property* as well as the soul and body of the believer. Contributions are taken up systematically every month, or once in two months. The following societies are exclusively sustained by these churches: the American Home Missionary Society; the American Congregational Union; the American and Western Education Societies.

They contribute largely to the education of the ministry, maintaining six Theological Seminaries, besides supplying facilities for the religious education of 320,961 children in the Sabbath School.

In connection with other denomiations, these churches, nearly 3000 in number, support the following societies: the American Bible Society; the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions; the American and Foreign Christian Union; the Seaman's Friends Society; the American Tract Society of Boston; the American Missionary Association.

ON MORAL QUESTIONS.

Congregational churches are the earnest friends of *temperance*. They believe and inculcate that every one, and especially professing Christians, should entirely abstain from all intoxicating drinks as a beverage.

By their principles and their history, they are earnestly attached to the doctrine of *personal liberty*. They believe and inculcate that the system of human bondage is contrary to the spirit and teachings of the Bible.

They are the strong friends of the government also, and believe that the powers that be are ordained of God, and that unconditional loyalty to their government is a Christian duty. No Congregational Church has been found disloyal in the recent struggle of the nation with its enemies.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF CONGREGATIONALISM.

BUT a superficial examination of the New Testament is needed to show us what principles of polity were adopted by the Apostles in the organization of the primitive churches. Under the guidance of the Spirit of God, and following the principles laid down by Christ in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, they adopted that mode of government which, for want of a better name, is now called Congregationalism. The name is simply a suggestion of the fact, that the *congregation possesses all the govering power*. The apostles invariably addressed each congregation of Christians as though it was the only church in the place, and when they referred to the churches of any given territory, they always used the plural number, as "the churches of Galatia," Macedonia, &c. The bishops, or teachers, or elders, were each the minister of one church, except in cases of a large church, where several men were associated, as "the elders of Ephesus," to whom Paul gave the name of bishops. Mosheim, who was a Lutheran, and whose work on ecclesiastical history is of high authority, says, vol. i. p. 86, "The highest authority was in the people, or the whole body of Christians in the apostolic churches, for even the apostles themselves inculcated by their example, that nothing of any moment was to be done, or determined on, but with the knowledge and consent of the brotherhood. The assembled people, therefore, elected their own rulers and teachers, or by their authoritative consent, received them when recommended to them. They also by their suffrages rejected or confirmed the laws that were proposed by their rulers in their assemblies; they excluded profligate or lapsed brethren, and restored them; they decided the controversies and disputes that arose; in a word, the people did everything that is proper for those in whom the supreme power is vested. Acts i. 15-26; Acts vi. 3-6; 2 Cor. viii. 19; Acts xviii. 17; 1 Cor. v. 4, 13; 2 Cor. ii. 6." Also, on same page, he says—"For all the churches in these primitive times were independent bodies; none of them were subject to the jurisdiction of any other." This he also affirms was the case with all the churches during a great part of the second century, on p. 142, vol. 1.

Neander, another high authority in Church history, testifies to the same. In the latter half of the second century, when the fervor of apostolic piety had begun to disappear, there arose unchristian dissensions among the clergy, and Jerome suggests that the idea of a standing officer

called a bishop, was resorted to as an expedient to quell them. The progress towards a hierarch was rapid. Ecclesiastical officers were multiplied. Men ambitious to acquire power made use of their sacred office to secure increased authority, and the order of the church was soon changed from the simple democracy of the Apostles into the oppressive abominations of the Papacy.

"Neighboring churches were first consolidated into one bishopric, then aggregrated bishoprics grew into a vast hierarchy, which overcame all popular resistance and settled itself securely for centuries at Rome, giving birth there to those monstrous and malignant heresies of doctrine, and those mournful and miserable immoralities of life, which, raying out gloom upon the general mind and heart, brought on the long night of the dark ages."—(Congregationalism by H. M. Dexter, D D., p. 22.)

A little band known as the Waldenses in the valleys of the Cottian Alps, successfully resisted this invasion of Papal corruption, maintaining their position against all persecution. This forms the only link between the Apostolic time and the Reformation.

The first Congregational church after the Reformation was formed in 1606 in Scrooby in the North of England, where a few Christians hunted by the hounds of the Establishment took refuge. That church emigrated to Amsterdam in Holland, John Robinson being its pastor. After a year it removed to Leyden, where it remained for eleven years. In 1620 one division of this church came to America and landed from the *Mayflower* on Plymouth Rock, Dec. 22, 1620. This was the first church of this, or any other order in America, except perhaps one or two small Episcopal organizations in Eastern Virginia More than eighty years after this the first Presbyterian church in this country was organized at Philadelphia.

The churches of New England are largely Congregational. There is a large and increasing membership in all the former free states and territories. With the exception of two denominations, it has the highest number of churches, and the largest membership of any Protestant sect in the United States. It supports a large number of missionaries in the newer portions of the States, and in the Territories, and in foreign lands. It has, at this date, March, 1868, over forty churches in Missouri, and the prospect of a rapid and extensive increase.

LETTERS MISSIVE FOR CALLING COUNCILS.

1. TO ORGANIZE A CHURCH.

To the Congregational Church in———

DEAR BRETHREN.—The Great Head of the Church having inclined a number of believers here to think that it is our duty to become associa

ted as a Congregational Church, and having taken the preliminary steps towards it, we respectfully request you, by your pastor and a delegate, to meet in council at———in this place, on the———of———at——— o'clock———to consider the expediency of our action, and advise us in reference thereto, and if thought best, recognize such organization by public and appropriate exercises.

Wishing you grace, mercy and peace, we subscribe ourselves,

Your brethren in Christ,

(Here insert names of Committee, of those proposing to unite, also the names of the Churches invited.)

---

2. TO ORDAIN OR INSTALL A MINISTER.

The Congregational Church in———to the Congregational Church in——— sendeth greeting:

BELOVED BRETHREN.—The Great Head of the Church has kindly united us, and the congregation statedly worshipping with us, in the choice of Mr. (Rev.) A. B. as our pastor and teacher, and he has accepted our invitation to that office. We therefore affectionately request your attendance by pastor and delegate at———on the———day of——— next, at———o'clock———to examine the candidate, and advise us in reference to the same; and if judged expedient, to assist in the ordina- (installation) exercises. Wishing you grace, mercy, and peace,

We are fraternally yours,

(Here insert names of committee of the church; also the names of the churches invited.)

(For the convenience of those who desire to organize ecclesiastical societies in connection with the church, the following is here inserted.)

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

FIRST

CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY.

OF————————

ARTICLE I. This society shall be called the First Congregation Ecclesiastical Society of————————

ART. II. Its object shall be to co-operate with the First Congregational Church of————————in providing for and maintaining the public worship of God in accordance with the christian faith and ecclesiastical order thereof.

ART. III. All persons who are statedly attendants at the meetings of the above church, and assist it in the support of the gospel, may become members by vote of a majority of the society, and entitled to vote at all its meetings, provided they are over eighteen, and not indebted to the society in any sum three months for dues.

ART. IV. There shall be three Trustees annually elected, a majority of whom shall be members of the church, to hold the property and manage the pecuniary affairs of the society according to the laws of this State.

Said Trustees shall be subject at all times to a directing vote of the society, and shall have no power to buy, or sell, mortgage or transfer property, without a specific vote of authority by the society.

ART. V. There shall be a Treasurer annually elected, who shall receive all money belonging to the society, and pay out the same, and shall make an annual report of his receipts and disbursements.

ART. VI. There shall be a Clerk annually elected, who shall keep a record of all proceedings of the society.

ART. VII. The annual meeting of the society shall be on Thursday after the first Wednesday in January, when the annual reports shall be presented and the election of officers take place. Provided, however, in case of failure to meet on the above day, the officers shall hold their places until their successors are elected.

ART. VIII. Special meetings may be convened at any time by giving notice from the pulpit one Sabbath previous. The Trustees shall call such meeting when requested by any five legal members of the society.

ART. IX. Ten members shall constitute a quorum, but no sale, mortgage, or transfer of property shall be made, except at a meeting which has been notified on two preceding Sabbaths.

ART. X This constitution may be altered or amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members, and any proposed change must be stated in the public notice of the meeting two weeks previous, before it can be entertained; but Art II. shall not be changed except by the unanimous vote and consent of all the members both of the church and society.

BASIS OF UNION BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND SOCIETY.

ART. I. The society shall hold the property, receive the income, and make all pecuniary engagements, appropriations and payments.

ART. II. In calling a Pastor the society and church will act as concurrent bodies, a majority of each being necessary to constitute a call; the church nominating, the society confirming or rejecting the nomination.

ART. III. The church will provide for the supply of the pulpit when there is no settled or stated Pastor, make the necessary arrangements for singing, and in general for the orderly celebration of religious worship. The society will liquidate all reasonable expenses thereby incurred.

ART. IV. The appointment of the Sexton and the fixing of his salary shall belong to the society.

ART. V. The control of the church edifice shall be with the Trustees, who shall give the exclusive use of it to the Pastor on the Sabbath, and at other times when the spiritual interests of the church and congregation demand it, and not allow its use for other than religious services, or meetings connected with the great moral and benevolent movements of the day.

ORDER OF BUSINESS AT ANNUAL MEETING.

1. Read minutes of last annual meeting.
2. Annual reports of Trustees and Treasurer.
3. Election of Trustees and other officers.
4. Proposed amendments to constitution.
5. Resolutions, unfinished or miscellaneous business.

INCORPORATION.

The *Ecclesiastical Society* or *Church* in order to be a legal body, must be incorporated in accordance with the laws of the State.

DIGEST OF THE LAWS OF MISSOURI,

PASSED 1865 AND 1866.

1. Any number of persons, not less than ten in number, may become an incorporated religious society, church or congregation, by presenting to the court of the proper county or judge thereof, in vacation, a copy of their constitution, or articles of association, and a list of all their members, together with a petition to such court or judge thereof, for a certificate of incorporation.

2. If the court or judge deems the said articles consistent with the constitution and laws of the United States or of this State, the same shall be filed with the clerk of said court, and the said court shall grant to said association a *Certificate of Incorporation.*

3. The society or church shall file a copy of all amendments to their articles of association, certified as such, with the clerk of the court within sixty days after their passage.

4. The first meeting of such incorporation shall be called, organized, and held in the manner prescribed in the articles of association.

5. Such corporation shall have power to raise money in any manner agreed upon in the articles of association.

6. The clerk or secretary of such incorporation shall keep a record of all proceedings in a book provided for that purpose, to be open to inspection by the members at all times.

FORM OF PETITION FOR INCORPORATION.

STATE OF MISSOURI, }
COUNTY OF——— } ss.

To the Hon.———*Judge of*
———*Court.*

We the members of the———of———Missouri, hereby petition your Honor to constitute us a body corporate by the above name, by granting us a certificate of incorporation in compliance with the provision of an act, approved March 19th, 1866.

Hereto is annexed a copy of our constitution with a list of all the members.

———— } In behalf of the
Chairman. } Association.

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Manual of the principles, doctrines
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